

Facilities Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes  
May 1, 2008, 4:00 pm  
Madison County Courthouse, Virginia City, MT

Those in attendance (taken from signup sheet): Chairman John Scully, County Commissioner Dave Schulz, County Commissioner Jim Hart, Architect Rick Schlenker, Dale Ragain, Dona Lindsey, Vergil Lindsey, Margie Edsall, Paul Marsh, Sheri Jarvis, Ed Ruppel, Frank Nelson, Bob Miller, Linsu Zimmer, Kim Hudson, Angela Mueller, Roger Staley, Toni James

Before the formal meeting, members of the committee toured two facilities and heard one presentation on a house to be considered for new office space: The Bowling House, The Vigilante Gift Shop, and the Jarvis Residence.

**The formal meeting** was called to order at 5:00 pm by Chairman Scully.

**Chairman Scully introduced** the new secretary, Robin Blazer. She will be taking minutes and acting as an administrator for the committee.

**Commissioner Schulz addressed** potential pros and cons of potential facilities.

The Bowling Property pros:

- ✓ Close to current facilities
- ✓ Good condition
- ✓ Has been considered before, so it is familiar property

The Bowling Property cons:

- ✓ Handicap access is non-existent
- ✓ Difficult to navigate traffic pattern
- ✓ Too many steps (4 story property)

The Trading Post pros:

- ✓ Close to current facilities

The Trading Post cons:

- ✓ Possible wiring problems
- ✓ Little to no insulation
- ✓ Questionable plumbing
- ✓ A large crack on the exterior of foundation is thought to be earthquake damage

The Jarvis property was not discussed, but will be considered upon physical tour of the property.

### **Past Minutes**

The minutes from the April 2, 2008 meeting were reviewed and approved.

### **General Discussion:**

The information packet received by committee members prior to this meeting contained a sheet that was mailed out to voters. It was included in this mailing to inform committee members of what was seen by the people of the county.

Chairman Scully addressed the survey draft prepared by Nancy Griffin and explained that it would be discussed further at a later meeting.

Chairman Scully has one more person to contact before an official facilities advisory committee is named. He explained that the committee will be in charge of submitting opinions and it will be a consistent core number of people at each meeting.

Bill Handley handed out a packet that he put together for distribution of information. It is a statement of facts from his point of view. He made extra copies that can be obtained from Secretary Robin Blazer by request or at the next meeting.

**Jail:**

Chairman Scully has discussed with the sheriff the need for him to come and make a presentation to the committee. He will present a current occupancy/run rate, will explain regulatory requirements such as male/female facilities, crime type facilities, etc. He will give a presentation of present facilities, and will give a projection of 5-15 years. He will not discuss Big Sky Law Enforcement because it is seen as a commission issue, not as a facilities advisory committee issue.

Discussion followed about whether the facility is a realistic snapshot of what is currently being used of the current jail and if the projection would be accurate based on current jailing rates.

**Next Meeting** was set for Wednesday, May 14, 2008 at 5:30 pm in the Madison County Courthouse, Virginia City, MT.

**Presentation by Rick Schlenker of Schlenker and McKittrick Architects:**

Rick Schlenker gave a presentation regarding a possible addition to the current courthouse. He was initially hired to achieve provisions for handicap access, ease of foot traffic throughout courthouse, and compliance to ADA, building codes and state standards, and to adhere to State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) requirements. He gave a brief history of the updates to the original 1870's era courthouse, one in 1913, and one in 1967. He explained that an initial proposal by MSU students addressed the space problem, but failed to meet historic standards.

Mr Schlenker presented drawings/renditions of proposals and updates. He explained that the current fire exits are inadequate and that the most cost effective plan would integrate only one elevator due to depth/tower requirements and maintenance costs. His original proposal would make additions seamless, integrating original-looking brick and re-facing the 1967 addition to look like part of the original building. His drawings meet standards of SHPO.

General discussion followed about whether it is feasible to put the elevator in the existing building and adding handicap parking. Mr Schlenker advised that while it is technically possible to add an elevator in the existing building, it would be cumbersome and would eliminate an entire staircase that is required for fire exit.

The proposed price for the original proposal, 1.5 years ago, was \$1,660,000, which includes a 20% contingency charge.

Mr. Schlenker's professional opinion is that the current building is in great need of expansion and added accessibility. There is no way to do it well without an elevator, and the current building does not meet current accessibility/fire code.

Question: Is the addition proposal practical? If not, would the current building be required to have access were it to be used for a different non-public purpose?

Mr. Schlenker addressed the question in that the addition adds parking spaces in the back, including a handicap space, a maintenance area, creates central mail room, six offices, storage, and expanded clerk/recorder space. However, it will displace approximately 5-6 offices. It solves the access issue, adds storage, adds parking, but does not add office space because it dislocates as much as it adds.

General discussion followed regarding eliminating parking spaces and adding as many office spaces as possible. Discussion followed whether it would meet historic standards to max out the maximum allowed square footage per floor (2500 sf per Peter Brown of SHPO). Mr Schlenker acknowledged that he has not presented a proposal with the maximum square footage, but that it would be possible. He said that the cost per square foot would not go up, but the total project cost certainly would. The restroom requirements would stay the same if the maximum square footage was used.

Commissioner Schulz reviewed and reiterated the MSU proposal and gave a brief history of the facility expansion proposals. It was general consensus among the facilities advisory committee that the maximum use of space should be encouraged, but recognize that it will not completely solve the problem.

Question: is there an alternative to an elevator?

Mr. Schlenker addressed that there are possible alternatives, but none that would be adequate to use in a public building. The only feasible handicap access is an elevator.

**Weed Board Office**

Marjie Adselon from the weed office noted that the commissioners said that it is important for the weed office to stay in Virginia City. However, she does have costs associated with a storage facility in Alder. To put in a 50x64 warehouse would be from \$98,000-\$110,000. The large storage facility is needed for additional storage for equipment.

**Schoolhouse Building Discussion:**

Roger Williams, Virginia City Fire chief, noted that while the schoolhouse has had no maintenance since about the 1950's, it is in pretty good shape. It is his opinion that \$1,000,000 would be a good deal to fix the schoolhouse (referencing previous discussions regarding cost to fix the schoolhouse building) rather than almost \$2,000,000 for the courthouse expansion. He wondered that if the courthouse were evaluated like the schoolhouse was, would it be any better seismically.

Mr. Schlenkler answered that because of the difference in the types of construction of the two buildings, the courthouse would probably be better in a seismic situation. The schoolhouse has no cross-bracing so would not stand up to the back/forth action of an earthquake.

Commissioner Schulz clarified that the original schoolhouse evaluation was done by Great West Engineering, not SMA.

The meeting was adjourned at 6pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Robin Blazer.